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# Horizon

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE & ART

W. H. Auden

H. E. Bates

John Betjeman

Cyril Connolly

Walter de la Mare

Louis MacNeice

J. B. Priestley

Frederic Prokosch

Herbert Read

Criticism by Geoffrey Grigson  
and Stephen Spender

A Drawing by Henry Moore

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JANUARY VOL. I, NO. 1 1940

*Edited by Cyril Connolly*

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# HORIZON

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

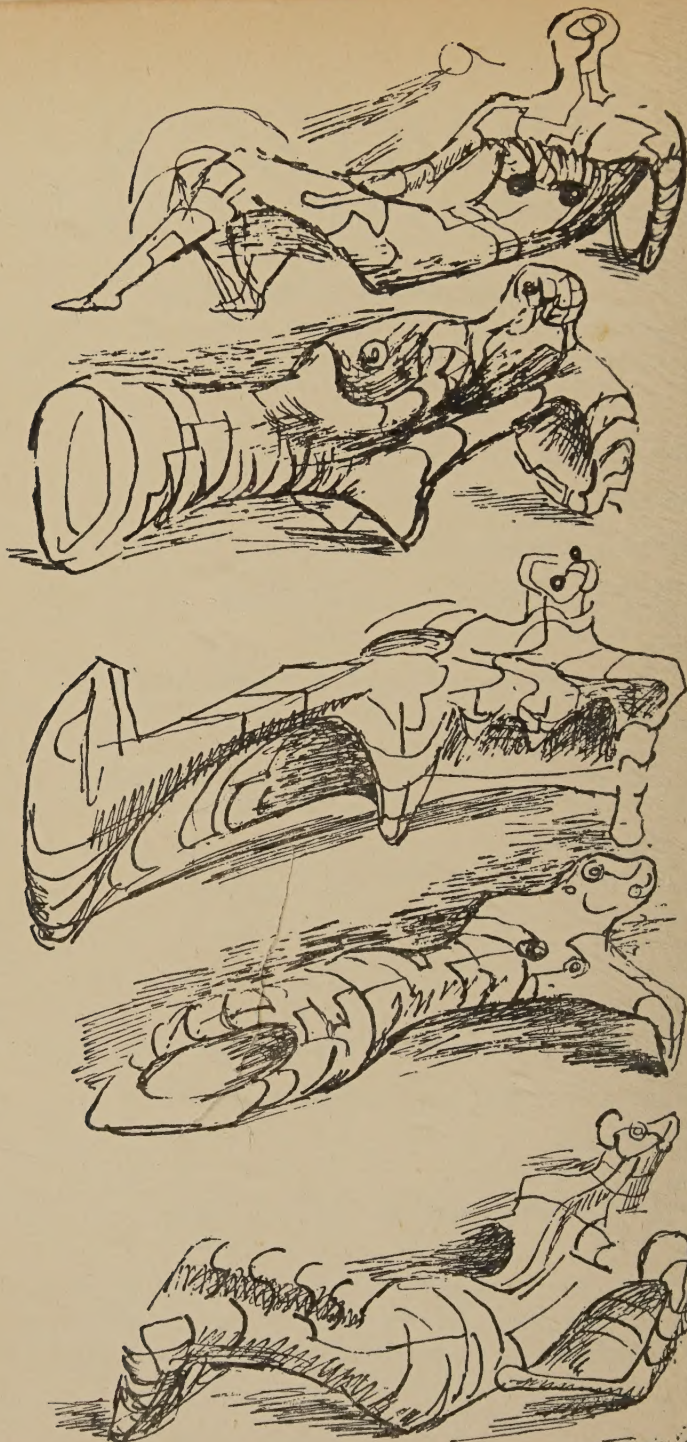
*Vol. I. No. 1. January 1940*

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COVER DESIGN BY JOHN PIPER

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# COMMENT

A magazine should be the reflection of its time, and one that ceases to reflect this should come to an end. The moment we live in is archaistic, conservative and irresponsible, for the war is separating culture from life and driving it back on itself, the impetus given by Left Wing politics is for the time exhausted, and however much we should like to have a paper that was revolutionary in opinions or original in technique, it is impossible to do so when there is a certain suspension of judgement and creative activity. The aim of *Horizon* is to give to writers a place to express themselves, and to readers the best writing we can obtain. Our standards are aesthetic, and our politics are in abeyance. This will not always be the case, because as events take shape the policy of artists and intellectuals will become linearer, the policy which leads them to economic security, and the atmosphere in which they can create, and to the audience by whom they will be appreciated. At the moment civilization is on the operating table and we sit in the waiting room. For so far this is a war without the two great emotions which made the Spanish conflict real to so many of us. It is a war which awakens neither Fity nor Hope, and what began as a routine police operation, a military sanction, is now hardening into the grim prehistorical necessity of keeping Alive.

The original *Life and Letters* which flourished ten years ago had no political aspect. But the change that has come over literature in the last decade is an increased consciousness of its political and economic basis. This is the only Marxist lesson that writers have soundly learnt, and so *Horizon* will have political articles, though it will never imitate those journals, in which, like pantomime donkeys, the political front legs kick and entangle the literary hind legs. *Horizon* is concerned with the general issues of peace and war and will consider the origins, ethics, conduct, and



conclusion of them in an enquiry open to the most diverse points of view, and for which the articles by Priestley and Read form a starting point.

Mrs. Woolf, in her pamphlet on reviewing, published by the Hogarth Press, maintains that the ordinary review is useless to author and reader; that it would be better for the general public if brief synopses of books were given together with a sign to denote approval or disapproval, that if the author wants criticism, he should pay the reviewer a private fee and consult him; and that editors would do better to spend money on a revival of the *Essay and Criticism* than the *Review*. *Horizon* being interested in imaginative writing, has no room for regular features or chronicles of the arts, and there will only be two kinds of review—the critical essay and general discussion of ideas or the brief short notice. There will be no half-hearted comment on the half-dead.

To those whose lives are tormented by the notion of talent in others a magazine with well-known names appears middlebrow, and without them cliquey. Such critics are implacable, so we address *Horizon* to those who generously enjoy quality in writing, and ask them to help make it known. *Horizon* will appear regularly after this number on the fifteenth of each month. The February number will include poems by George Barker, MacNeice, Betjeman, Day Lewis; a reminiscence of Henry James by Sir Hugh Walpole; Byron on 'Federal Union', 'Communist Politics and the Intellectuals' by Howard Evans, 'Kilvert's Village' by William Plomer, September Journal by Stephen Spender, and stories by Elizabeth Bowen and G. F. Green.

*Horizon* welcomes contributions, subscriptions, and comment. If you like this number please show it to your friends and ask them to subscribe.

# FREDERIC PROKOSCH

## MOLIERE

Molière, with his deliberate eye and urbane  
 Pen, pierced the skull: in the tart elegance of his verse  
 As in a collector's palm, lay man's split, membranous brain.

What he said about avarice, affectation, death,  
 Was clad in such lucidity—it almost seemed  
 That there was little he intuitively discerned or even dreamed

Of that horrible disorderly whirlpool, man's desire:  
 The hooked, retaliating nightmare, the dirty tears, the  
     hissing breath—  
 To tell of these would demand a pen dipped not in ink but  
     in fire!

And yet, he knew, he knew; and all those others knew as  
 well.

Through the clipped and ordered park, the salon, the  
     avenue,  
 They walked, rosy with the approaching glow and spectacle  
     of hell.

Stricken already with a common and incurable disease,  
 Élimène, Alceste, Tartuffe, Sganarelle,  
 Lifted, colourful as idols, passed and bowed among the  
     maple trees.

Rain fell on the statues, darkened the cathedrals. Rain  
 Decade upon decade darkened the villas and the quais,  
 The maple trees and beech trees hung moping above the  
     Seine.



The momentary perfection of a gesture held in its control  
All the heat and squabble of men caught in an entertaining  
mood,  
Pinning to a couplet the queer, brief spasms of the human  
soul.

Flawless, tremendous actors in an antiquated play,  
They march through album after album as through the  
darkness of a wood,  
Bearing civilization, like a mask, from yesterday into  
to-day—

A civilization as marvellous, and as far, far away  
As that of Rameses: the intricately spun  
Laws of reason lie burnished like hieroglyphics in the sun

And whatever it illuminated, whatever it gave  
Of learning and perception in wave upon black wave  
Lies lost as utterly as Othello's howl, or Dido's unforgettable  
cave.

WALTER DE LA MARE

# THE OTHERS

friendly?' 'I think.' 'Or—neutral?' 'How to tell?'  
 'Not hostile?' 'Well, who then would intercede?'  
 'And do you rap? Or crystal gaze? Or set  
 'Cards in the dark?—glass, Ouija, or planchette?  
 'Madame Medium pay? Book—candle—bell?'  
 'Oh no; I sit and read?'  
 'I merely sit!'

'Sometimes. Why not? The air,  
 'And Ariel's air, must thrill with secrecies  
 'And the tentacles of sense. *We* share  
 'Thoughts and feelings only by surmise.  
 'I speak: I watch and listen. But faith alone  
 'Is that the wellspring of your life's my own.  
 'When goodbye is said, and comes the night,  
 'That proof has each of either—out of sight?  
 'Even now—to eyes of love how clear!—  
 'The ghost in you I hold most dear.  
 'When then you challenge me, in mockery or dismay,  
 'For evidence for *them*, I can but say,  
 'Deeper my small solitude may be  
 'Surer it of unseen company.  
 'Haunts with loveliness this silent night.  
 'Evils?" They too may prowl. 'Gainst them we had best  
 'Stand unrelentingly both mind and breast.  
 'I cannot answer, *No*, then. Only pray:  
 'The press of life and love the soul shall stay.  
 '"good-night" come . . . Well, this shall be confessed:  
 'Grieves me to the heart when, blessing the Blest,  
 'I bid, Alas!—what truth dare not betray—  
 'I am the happier when I am away.'

W. H. AUDEN

## CRISIS

"Of my sowing such straw I reap. O human folk, why set the he  
where exclusion of partnership is necessary?" Purgatorio XII

Where do They come from, those whom we so much  
As on our dearest location falls the chill  
Of their crooked wing and endangers  
The melting friend, the aquaduct, the flower

Terrible Presences that the ponds reflect  
Back at the married, and when the blond boy  
Bites eagerly into the shining  
Apple, emerge in their shocking fury.

And we realise the woods are deaf and the sky  
Nurses no one, and we are awake and these  
Like farmers have purpose and knowledge,  
And upon us their hate is directed.

We are the barren pastures to which they bring  
The resentment of outcasts; on us they work  
Out their despair; they wear our weeping  
As the disgraceful badge of their exile.

O we conjured them here like a lying map:  
Desiring the extravagant joy of life  
We lured with a mirage of orchards  
Fat in the lazy climate of refuge.

Our money sang like streams on the aloof peaks  
Of our thinking that beckoned them on like girls;  
Our culture like a West of wonder  
Shone a solemn promise in their faces.

## CRISIS

II

expected the beautiful or the wise,  
dy to see a charm in our childish fib,  
Pleased to find nothing but stones and  
Able at once to create a garden.

those who come are not even children with  
big indiscriminate eyes we had lost,  
Occupying our narrow spaces  
With their anarchist vivid abandon.

carriage already adroit, having learnt  
int at the table of a father's rage;  
a mother's distorting mirror  
they discovered the Meaning of Knowing.

pioneers have long adapted themselves  
in night and the nightmare; they come equipped  
reply to terror with terror,  
with lies to unmask the least deception.

inture of marriage nevertheless  
is prepared; though all our whiteness shrinks  
n the hairy and clumsy bridegroom,  
conceive in the shuddering instant.

rig, barren must wish to bear though the Spring  
ne crooked that dreads to be straight  
see ot alter its prayer and summons  
este of the dark a horrible rector.

ecirped and vigorous tiger can move  
The through the borough of murder; the ape  
ht illy at home in the parish  
themacing and licking; but we have

an  
gl, eir pupils. Our tears well from a love  
isfo, ver outgrown; our cities predict  
at it, an we hope; even our armies  
o express our need of forgiveness.

# JOHN BETJEMAN

## UPPER LAMBOURNE

Up the ash tree climbs the ivy,  
 Up the ivy climbs the sun  
 With a twenty thousand pattering  
 Has a valley breeze begun  
 Feathery ash, neglected elder  
 Shift the shade and make it run,

Shift the shade toward the nettles,  
 And the nettles set it free  
 To streak the stained Carrara headstone  
 Where, in nineteen twenty three,  
 He who trained a hundred winners  
 Paid The Final Entrance Fee.

Leathery limbs of Upper Lambourne,  
 Leathery skin from sun and wind,  
 Leathery breeches, spreading stables,  
 Shining saddles left behind,  
 To the down the string of horses  
 Canters out of sight and mind.

Feathery ash in leathery Lambourne  
 Waves above the sarsen stone  
 And Edwardian plantations  
 So coniferously moan  
 As to make the swelling downland,  
 Far surrounding, seem their own.



LOUIS MACNEICE  
CUSHENDUN

Fuchsia and ragweed and the distant hills  
Made as it were out of clouds and sea:  
All night the bay is plashing and the moon  
Marks the break of the waves.

Limestone and basalt and a whitewashed house  
With passages of great stone flags  
And a walled garden with plums on the wall  
And a bird piping in the night.

Forgetfulness: brass lamps and copper jugs  
And home-made bread and the smell of turf or flax  
And the air a glove and the water lathering easy  
And convolvulus in the hedge.

Only in the dark green room beside the fire  
With the curtains drawn against the winds and waves  
There is a little box with a well-bred voice;  
What a place to talk of War.

*August, 1939*

LOUIS MACNEICE

# THE BRITISH MUSEUM READING ROOM

Under the hive-like dome the stooping haunted reader  
Go up and down the alleys, tap the cells of knowledge  
Honey and wax, the accumulation of years .  
Some on commission, some for the love of learning,  
Some because they have nothing better to do  
Or because they hope these walls of books will deaden  
The drumming of the demon in their ears.

Cranks, hacks, poverty-stricken scholars,  
In pince-nez, period hats or romantic beards  
And cherishing their hobby or their doom,  
Some are too much alive and some are asleep  
Hanging like bats in a world of inverted values,  
Folded up in themselves in a world which is safe and sane  
This is the British Museum Reading Room.

Out on the steps in the sun the pigeons are courting  
Puffing their ruffs and sweeping their tails or taking  
A sun-bath at their ease  
And under the totem poles—the ancient terror—  
Between the enormous fluted Ionic columns  
There seeps from heavily jowled or hawk-like foreigners  
The guttural sorrow of the refugees.

*July,*

J. B. PRIESTLEY

## THE WAR—AND AFTER

People still write to me to say that we are at war because of the war. This is not true. Apart from some young Nazis and officers hoping for quick promotion, nobody likes and wants war. The Nazis based their whole technique on this fact. In a really belligerent world they would never have brought off their remarkable series of successes. The trick was to threaten war in a world ready to pay almost any price for peace. The Nazis did not want the spoils of it. Collecting those spoils was rapidly turning the national industry of the Third Reich.

Other people, who applauded Leftish writers like myself, have said that Britain should make a stand against the Nazis. We revile us as warmongers because we believe in peace, but that Britain is now making. Why? Can you silence the Gestapo by passing a few resolutions in Parliament? We passed thousands of resolutions, spoke constantly of peace and goodwill, but the dark stain spread over the map of Central Europe, the Gestapo moved in, and refugees came thick and fast. Bernard Shaw says it is not now, because his friend Stalin has everything under control. Well, Stalin may have made special arrangements to ensure that Shaw comes to no harm, but the rest of us in Western Europe do not feel quite so sure of our fate, especially those of us who do not share Shaw's curious admiration for dictators.

Then we have those people who say that we have no right to defy the employers of the Gestapo and the owners of the concentration camps because the British Empire is the earthly paradise. Look at the Kaffirs in Johannesburg. What about India? I have long been in favour of transforming the British Empire into something nearer to what it pretends to be, but I believe we shall have a better

doing that when the Nazis are no longer screaming and cracking whips at our heels. In fact, we have a better chance of doing anything worth doing. On the other hand, if they stay at our heels, we shall be left off with our lives.

There has been a great deal of confused talk and blarney about war aims. It should be understood that a settlement of the world cannot possibly be part of our aims, if only because all the powers not at war must have their say in the world's affairs. What Britain and France have to do is to put an end to that intolerable state of things in which, every six months, Goebbels translates atrocity stories to another neighbouring country and then proceeds to mobilise again. It is no use our all being so entangled in elaborate quarrels about the ultimate world order with the Nazis still round the corner. In my opinion it is quite impossible to do anything with a world that can be dominated at any moment by the Nazis. But we must not take my view of these people from their propaganda (the poor victims of Versailles) but from Rauschning and now, and are acquainted with dynamic-revolutionary technique.

On the other hand, it would be stupid not to entertain some idea of a possible new world order. Nor do we agree with the pessimists, who point out that here we are in another war on our hands and nobody ever learns anything. The atmosphere of this war is so different from the last which at first was like a long hysterical Bank Holiday that it seems to me humanity has learnt a great deal. The world is nearly all ripe for a change in international affairs. It is the ordinary folk, especially the younger ones, even the women. With them the natural drift of their tastes and feelings has been away from nationalism and towards internationalism. They have to be hectored and dragooned into nationalism. Left to themselves, with aviation, sport, films, fashions and the like, and they are cosmopolitan and international. Curiously enough, the only exception is to be found in Soviet Russia.

## THE WAR—AND AFTER

Federal Union is being widely discussed as a form the new world order might take. It is a fruitful idea, but at the moment I think it is being rushed a bit too much. Thus, before Britain takes its place in a federation of democracies, it would do no harm if Britain became a good deal more truly democratic than it is at present. For years now it has been going back from rather than achieving a true democracy. The Right Wing has made too many gains during this decade of the Thirties. That slow invisible revolution, upon which we used to pride ourselves, seems to me to have been retarded. That is why the atmosphere here has begun to grow so stuffy and infertile. For my part I would hesitate to saddle any federation with the Britain we have now. The political, financial and social engine badly needs overhauling. It is a pity some of our Left friends, instead of giving themselves a headache wondering what attitude they will ask them to adopt next, do not demand that they should see this democracy for which we are supposed to be fighting.

The new peace will not be much better than the old one, however, if we allow ourselves to be represented everywhere by foreign office experts. These gentlemen tend either to perpetuate tradition, which is precisely what we do not want, or to become the mouthpieces of narrow economic interests. They do not desire to turn out a brand-new article, obviously it is easier to use setting the same old machinery to work. I am always enough to remember that, in spite of silly catch-cries, there was plenty of good will about, twenty years ago, but it was never adequately represented. The old machinery has started again. Geneva became the most cynical city in Europe.

It is significant that here at last is a war that has not been fought for any economic motive? For I do not believe that we are fighting because some imperial traders want to keep their colonies and plantations, capitalists wish to protect their investments, and merchants hope for bigger markets when their rivals are defeated. And I am wondering if Peter Freuchen is right when he declares that we have come to



## HORIZON

the end of the long era of Economic Man. What happens if we drop the idea that man is primarily a producer and consumer? Nobody can complain that man lacks inventiveness in the sphere of production, and this war, like the last, is certainly going to stimulate his ingenuity and productive power. We can take that for granted. But I am wondering if, once you have raised the lowest scale of living, which is something we have not properly tried to do yet in Britain, you could not move forward then on a non-economic theme of human life. The Nazis have had a wild shot at it, but unfortunately their very undistinguished minds have been dominated by basement gangster values.

What do human beings want most? The answer appears to be, Security and Freedom. Security comes first, for you do not know when your children will have their next meal, you are not interested in the refinements of political theory. (This fact is apt to be overlooked by the democracies.) On the other hand, the point at which the demand for security changes into the desire for freedom is soon reached. (This fact is overlooked by the totalitarian states.) Security-at-the-expense-of-freedom only seems to apply with most people to elementary needs and does not apply to radio sets, cars, tiled bathrooms, antique furniture, collections of etchings, and the like. Freedom, by which we do not mean anything transcendental but the absence of the censor, the informer, propaganda-at-all-costs, forced labour, and the whole dreadful paraphernalia of the police state, comes long before these things are reached, at least as the healthy-minded. It seems nothing while you have it. But it seems everything when you have lost it. As the nearest refuge.

It may be, however, that there is something wrong with the modern world, no matter whether it accepts capitalism, democracy, communism, Nazism, Fascism, that is, something rapidly reducing the number of the healthy-minded, something addling the wits of man, is making it harder and harder to be easy, merry, affectionate and wise. It may be that all this fuss about machinery does some damage.

agination, that life in our huge idiotic cities poisons the  
che, that too many people secretly regard their own  
vities with contempt, that we are creating an atmosphere,  
peace as well as in war, in which the spirit cannot  
ver freely, that our inability to answer the major ques-  
ns of life and our frequent pretence that therefore they  
not still exist are producing profound and terrible  
fflicts. Perhaps where we need it most, we have no  
ginot Line.

## HERBERT READ

# AT THE MOMENT OF WRITING

I give my contribution to this discussion a temporizing title because the forces engaged in the war change from so completely from time to time that only a mind as agile as a communist's can meet each phase with a ready "analysis". At the moment of writing the Empire and France seem strongly united and comparatively consistent in their attitude. They are no doubt embarrassed by their commitments to Poland and Czechoslovakia, now represented by shadow governments of exiles; and there are mutterings of discontent in India, South Africa and to some slight extent on the Home Front. But I think we have to admit that bored as most of us are with the war, there is no considerable opposition to its continuance. The general state of opinion in France and Great Britain might best be described as *fatalistic*.

On the other side, at the moment of writing, Germany is isolated. The understanding with Russia does not seem to amount to more than a non-intervention agreement. Russia will do nothing to help the capitalist governments of Great Britain and France; but she is equally determined to avoid fighting on the side of the anomalous government of Germany. Like most of us, Russia is waiting for something to happen inside Germany.

In a military sense, the war is a deadlock, and it is difficult to see how it can "loosen up" in any decisive way. As a result of this deadlock the most considerable struggle is going on in non-military spheres—namely, in economic diplomacy and propaganda.

Whether in due course we can exhaust Germany economically is a question which I cannot answer. It would seem

any case to be a long-term policy, and meanwhile a decision may be reached in the other spheres, diplomacy and propaganda.

These two spheres are interrelated. The sympathy we can win in other countries depends partly, of course, on the economic bribes we can offer them. But no real support will come unless we can also win the confidence of neutral countries and persuade them that it is equally their battle which we are fighting.

Diplomacy is the staff-work of such a war of persuasion; but the force comes from the vitality and appeal of the ideas which we express as a nation and as an alliance. For this reason our intellectuals are really our first-line troops, and on their efficiency will depend the outcome of the war. The intellect cannot be conscripted. Its workings are spontaneous; its operations are individual and secret. It is rendered completely ineffective by regimentation, by false directions, and by hypocrisy. It can only come into action when it is on the side of truth.

Do the war aims of the Allies represent a body of truth to which the intellect can pledge its services? That, it seems to me, is the essential question in this discussion.

From the marxist and fascist point of view (the singular intentional) these aims are an ideological facade for imperialist aggression. It may be true that we do not want more colonies or to extend our empire in any way; but we mean to defend what we have got, which is an unfair share, and between such defence and aggression there is no essential difference.

Let us admit so much. But what of the other side? Germany claims, not very convincingly, that she has not sufficient *Lebensraum* for her population of 80 millions. Nor has Belgium, nor has Italy, nor, for that matter, has Great Britain. Such claims for *Lebensraum* are really a futile and impossible attempt to solve what is actually an economic problem. There is plenty of elbow-room in Germany: lacking, however, are the natural resources to ensure a high standard of living for the 80 millions by

*present methods of production and distribution.* It is conceivable that socialised production "financed" by socialised credit would completely change the situation. In any case, the problem is not solved by the extension of national frontiers or the acquisition of colonies; for these involve the taking over of existing populations which are sometimes worse off economically than the population of the step-mother country. There is good reason to believe that the extension of Germany's *Lebensraum* by the incorporation of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland has merely intensified her economic problems. The addition of a few barren tracts in equatorial Africa would not help matters to any appreciable extent.

The truth about all this question of imperialism, capitalism, unemployment, stakhanovism, etc. is that the whole world is suffering from the effects of an economic crisis, which crisis is due essentially to a disparity between the rates of production and consumption. The remedy must, of course, be found on the consumption side. The restrictive control of production, including the deliberate destruction of surplus supplies of food, is a criminal action which would only have entered the minds of desperate men. But the increase of consumption involves problems of monetary exchange, currency and credit which strike at the whole basis of the capitalist system. Yet on the solution of these problems depends the whole future of our civilization.

Now let us return to the war. With every nation, including all the neutrals, including the United States and Russia\*, in the grip of this economic crisis, it is futile to go about bleating in the marxist jargon of 1867. The acquisition of markets for export or investment has become

\*Admittedly the crisis has its special aspects in Russia, due to the centralised control of production and distribution; but Russia is involved in the general crisis, for otherwise she would not be compelled to export foodstuffs badly needed for her own under-nourished population, nor to resort to the capitalist devices of investment and taxation. Russia's problem may be one of the under-production of capital goods; but in any case, it arises from an unbalanced economy which can only be regulated by participating in the equally unbalanced economy of the rest of the world.



subordinate aspect of the problem: all the markets of the world in the hands of one nation would not solve the problem even for that one nation.

The war is a localised and comparatively insignificant aspect of this general problem. For that reason it is quite irrelevant to demand its cessation: you might as well demand the cessation of accidents on the roads. War is merely an epiphenomenon of the crisis. If we stop it, here and now, it will sooner or later break out again on another front, in another form. The only way to stop the war is to solve the economic crisis.

Meanwhile we hear the words liberty, freedom, tolerance. Very good words, but do they represent anything real in the context of the economic crisis? In my opinion they do—something very real. I believe that the crisis can only be solved in the spirit, and by men imbued with the spirit, of these words. The people who decry these words—communists, fascists, totalitarians and authoritarians of every kind—are people who want to solve the crisis by violent means. That is to say, they do not want a general solution of the crisis, but a partial solution which will temporarily benefit their country, their party or their class at the expense of the rest of the world. Communism (Stalinist version) is a solution of the problem for the benefit of a bureaucratic caste; fascism is a solution of the problem for the benefit of a political élite; imperialism is a solution of the problem for the benefit of a plutocratic oligarchy.

The only fair solution of the problem is one which will be reached by free and unprejudiced discussion—in other words, by the methods of democratic socialism. I believe that democratic socialism is the next desirable stage in political evolution, and I welcome any force or tendency which leads in that direction. I do not believe that democratic socialism is the final stage or in itself free from intolerable defects—but that is another story. The immediate aim should be the democratisation of the consequent elements of a European federation, the reorganization of production and distribution on an international

egalitarian basis, and the concurrent transformation of the capitalist system.

In an obscure way British and American statesmen—certainly statesmen like Roosevelt and Halifax—do seem to realize that the capitalist game is up, and they are groping in the direction of a democratic revolution. They have all the ingrained habits of their class and tradition to fight against; but there is in their pronouncements a note of sincerity and it is a democratic note. They will probably soon be disowned by their capitalist supporters, but a democratic socialist party will inevitably come into power in all the advanced industrial countries of the world, and such a party will create the *economic* basis of a permanent peace. It should also have the will and the power to create the no less necessary psychological basis for such a peace.

To stop the war, besides being a futile gesture, would leave the crisis unresolved. It would postpone the necessity of a solution. Therefore, in a spirit of fatalism (which my opponents are welcome to call a spirit of sadism) I say: Let the war go on. It is the shortest and therefore the best way to replace the capitalist system by a democratic system and which will at the same time rescind those partial and tyrannical solutions of the crisis represented by the Soviet Union no less than by Germany and Italy.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

## THE ANT-LION

The Maures are my favourite mountains, a range of old rounded mammalian granite which rise three thousand feet above the coast of Provence. In summer they are covered with dark forests of cork and pine, with paler interludes on the northern slopes of bright splay-trunked chestnut, and undergrowth of arbutus and bracken. There is always green in the Maures, and the mountains are green throughout the summer, never baked like the limestone, or like the Southern Alps a slagheap of gritty oystershell. They swim in a golden light in which the radiant ebony green of their vegetation stands out against the sky, a region hardly inhabited, yet friendly as those dazzling landscapes of Claude and Poussin, in which shepherds and sailors from antique ships meander under incongruous elms. Harmonies of light and colour, drip of water over fern; they inculcate in those who stay long in the Midi, and whose brains are addled by iodine, a habit of moralising, brooding about causes. What makes men divide up into nations and go to war? Why do they live in cities? And what is the true relationship between Nature and Man?

The beaches of the Maures are of white sand, wide, with a ribbon of umbrella pines, below which juicy mesembrianthemum and dry flowers of the sand stretch to within a yard of the sea. Lying there amid the pacific blues and greens the eyes open and shut on the white surface: the vague blurred philosophising continues. Animism, pantheism, images of the earth soaring through space like the swerve of a ping-pong ball circulate in the head, the woolly brain meddles with ethics. No more power, no aggression, no intolerance. All must be free. When, suddenly, a disturbance. Under the eye the soil is pitted with a conical depression, about the size of a candle

extinguisher, down whose walls the sand trickles gently moved by a suspicion of wind. Whizz, and a clot is hurled to the top again, the bottom of the funnel cleared, disobedience to the natural law. As it silts up it is cleared by another whirr, and there appears, at the nadir of the cone, a brown pair of curved earwig horns, antlers of a giant earwig that churn the sand upwards like a steam shovel.

Now an ant is traversing the dangerous arrête. He sidles, slithers, and goes fumbling down the Wall of Death to the waiting chopper. Snap! He struggles up, mounting the steep banking grain by grain as it shelves beneath him, till a new eruption is engineered by his waiting enemy. Sand belches out, the avalanche engulfs him, the horny sickle contracts and disappear with their beady victim under the whiteness. Mystery, frustration, tragedy, death are then a large in this peaceful wilderness. Can the aggressive instinct be analysed out of those clippers? Or it's lethal headpiece removed by a more equitable distribution of raw materials? The funnels, I observe, are all round me. The sand is pockmarked with these geometrical death-traps, engineering triumphs of insect art. And this horsefly might be used for an experiment. I shove it downwards. The Claws seize on a wing, and the struggle is on. The fight proceeds like an atrocity of chemical warfare. The great fly threshes the soil with its wings, it buzzes and drones while the sand heaves round it's propellers and the facets of its giant projectors glitter with light. But the clippers do not relax and disappear tugging the fly beneath the surface. The threshing continues, a faint buzzing comes from the invisible horsefly, and its undercarriage appears, with legs waving. Will it take off? The wings of the insect bomber pound the air, the fly starts forward and upwards, and hauls after it—o fiend, embodiment of evil! A creature whose clippers are joined to a muscle-bound thorax and a vile yellow armour-plated body, squat and powerful, with a beetle set of legs to manœuvre this engine of destruction. The Tank with a Mind now scuttles backwards in reverse, the stern

the legs disappear, then the jaws which drag its prey. It beats the ground. A fainter wheeze and whirr, no hope, the last wing tip vanished, the air colder, the pines nearer, the cone empty except for the trickle, the sifting silting down the funnel of the grains of pearl coloured

Nature arranged this; gave the Ant-Lion its dredging and its cannon-ball service. How can it tell, buried apt for the striking choppers, that the pebble which rolls in has to be volleyed out of the death trap, while the roaching ant must be collected by gentle eruptions, stayed by a perpetual sandy shower? And answer as I, we do not know.

Let the relationship between the Ant-Lion and the curv-beaches of Pampelone suggests a parallel. This time at . Here Art and Nature have formed one of the most monious scenes in Europe. The fortress cathedral, the pop's palace with its hanging gardens, and the old bridge, of ancient brick, blend into the tawny landscape through which the emancipated Tarn flows from its gorges to theonne. Here again one wanders through this dream of the dle Ages, by precincts of the rosy cathedral where pious buzz like cockroaches, to be brought up by a ce on the portcullis of the Bishop's Palace. 'Musée louse-Lautrec.' Tucked in the conventional Gothic of fortress is a suite of long rooms in which the ner of the artist, using all her feudal powers, forced municipal authorities to hang the pictures of her son. fortunate than those of Aix, who refused Cézanne's est to leave his pictures to the city, they were intimi-d by the Countess into placing them in this most d corner, lighted and hung in salons whose decoration concealed all traces of the unsightly past.

he concierge turns proudly to the Early Work—oral scenes and sentimental evocations of Millet—e he likes best, they are what the Count was doing e he left his home and was corrupted by the Capital. n come the drawings, in which emerges the fine savage



line of the mature artist, that bold, but not (as in some of the paintings) vulgar stroke, which hits off the brutality of his subjects, or the beauty of those young girls doomed to such an inevitable end. In the large room beyond are the paintings, a morgue of End of Century vice, a succession of canvases in which there is hardly daylight and where the only creature who lives by day is the wizened little Irish jockey. The world of the hunchback Count is nocturnal, gas-lit, racy, depraved and vicious; the shocked Albigeois who pass through the gallery are rivetted by the extraordinary picture of the laundress who checks over with the *sous-maitresse* the linen from her Maison. As one goes from picture to picture the atmosphere intensifies, Valentin le Désossé and La Goulue become familiars, and the lovely girls blur into the dark of the Moulin Rouge, where one distinguishes a favourite figure, the long sad nocturnal, utterly empty but doggedly boring face of 'L'Anglais', some English habitué to whom constant all night attendance has given the polish of a sentry at his post.

At the end of the gallery is a door before which the concierge smiles mysteriously, as if to prepare us for Pompeian revelations. He opens it, and we emerge on a small terrace. The sun is shining, the sky is blue, the Tarn ripples underneath. Beyond the ancient bridge of the bishop's citadel and the arches of the bridge stretches the landscape of the Albigeois, foothills of green cordons delicately crowned by pink hill villages, which merge into the brown of the distant Cevennes under the penetrating light of the near-south, the transitional Mediterranean. A lovely and healthy prospect, in which fields and cities of men blend everywhere into the earth and the sunshine. One takes a deep breath, when obstinately from behind the closed door, one feels a suction; attractive fights repulsion as in the cold wavering opposition between the like poles of a magnet. Deep in his lair the Ant-Lion is at work; the hunchback Count recalls us; the world of poverty, greed, bad air, consumption, and of those who never go to bed awaits, but there awaits also an artist's integration.

, a world in which all trace of sentiment or decadence is excluded by the realism of the painter, and the vitality of his line. In the sunlight on the terrace we are given the choice between the world of Nature and the world of Art. Nature seems to win, but at the moment of victory there is something lacking, and it is that lack which only the natural world inside can supply—progress, for example, the view from the Palace has not altered, except slightly deteriorate, for several hundred years. The enjoyment of it requires no more perception than had Erasmus, while the art of Lautrec is modern, and can only be appreciated by those who combine a certain kind of aristocratic satisfaction at human beings acting in character, and in this character, with the love of fine drawing and colour. Not that Lautrec was a great artist, he is to Degas as Maupassant is to Flaubert, one who extended the true conception of realism by which a great master accepts the world as it is for the sake of its dynamism, and for the sake of the extraordinarily responsive quality of that world to the artist who has learnt how to impose his will on it. The world of Lautrec is artificial because it excludes goodness and beauty as carefully as it excludes the sun. But it is an ordered world, a world of melancholy and ignorance, a world of melancholy because ignorant, patient in the tread of pleasure), and so the artist compels us from the start because force and intelligence dominate that arrangement. And once back, we are back in his dream, in a dreamer's dream of the world; the sunlight seems tawdry, the red brick vulgar, the palace ornate, his crowd who stand with their tall hats gaping at the well-seasoned Can-Can dancers are in the only place worth being.

Now I understand the Ant-Lion. It is in Nature and has with a natural right to its existence. There is no contest between them, it is an advanced gadget in the machine which includes the peaceful hills and the beach with its reedy pools of brackish water. Nor is there any contest between Lautrec and the landscape of Albi. Albi is the oyster, and the contents of the museum are the

Pearl. The irritant? The action of a physical deformity, an aristocratic, artistic but unoriginal mind which was happiest in the company of its inferiors, and which liked to be surrounded by the opposite sex in places where the deformity could be concealed by potency, or by the distribution of money. The result, a highly specialised painter, one of nature's very latest experiments. And even that peaceful landscape was home in the Middle Ages of that subversive doctrine, the Albigensian heresy; a primitive anarchism which taught that men were equal and free, which did not believe in violence and believed in a chosen priesthood in the Cathari who attained purity by abstinence, while the Count encouraged the Count's royal ancestors to come through excess and indulgence out on the other side. It was they, who believed that the human race should cease to procreate, and so solve the problem of evil, who were massacred at Muret and Lavaur, and whom Simon de Montfort slaughtered with the remark 'The Lord will know his own.' And the Heretics were right. Had a revolt against procreation spread outwards from Albi the world would have become an empty place, nor would such obstinate human beings who survived have been driven to kill each other for living-room, victims, for all we may know, by some deeper instinct of self-destruction which bids them make way for a new experiment, the civilisation of the termite or the rat.

Much has happened since the summer. To-day the Maures are out of bounds, the Museum closed, and many generalisations based on incorrect assessment of the facts have fallen to pieces, but, (since the operations of the Ant-Lie have now been extended), it seems worth while to recall that the statements on the life of pleasure which Lautréamont took from his witnesses at the Tabarin and the Moulin de la Galette, and which he so vigorously recorded on canvas are still available to the traveller of the future, and assure their truth.

H. E. BATES

## THE BRIDGE

## I

The summer my father died my sister and I decided to start a guest-house together. Of course we were fools, I think we both thought it time to make something of the too-large red-brick family house where for so long we had been no family. Mother had been dead six years. Now, for the first time, we were feeling our independence. All through that summer the weather was lovely. My father had died in March, and we spent the whole of May, June and July replanning and redecorating the house, putting in new baths, central heating, even a second staircase. We hoped to be ready by August, and all through those weeks of clear dry weather we had every window open and there was that fine exhilarating smell of new paint and new wood in every corner of the house. My father had been a country solicitor of a solid and careful type who felt that his position to be of supreme importance in life. For that reason the disappointment of having two daughters had hurt him greatly, and although he had borne with my sister, who is older than I by seven years, he had never fully been able to bear with me. I have always done my best to understand this and not bear him any ill-will because of it. He wanted sons to follow him in a profession where he had followed for five generations, and to have had that tradition broken by a girl who grew up to be a little irresponsible, rather self-centred and highly impracticable, was a shock from which he never properly recovered. He exacted a sort of revenge on me, whether by conscious or unconscious means I could never tell, by showing a certain partiality towards my sister. I was hurt by this partiality, and I have since tried to understand it too. What I can't



understand is why my father did not make the most revolutionary possible break with tradition and take my sister into the solicitor's profession with him. Dora would have made an admirable solicitor. She is utterly practical, resourceful, conscientious and in a way very ingenious. Her straight brown hair is and always has been parted directly in the middle: so straight and accurate and unchanging that it gives the feeling of being the result of a positive and ingenious mathematical calculation. Her clear, rather white-skinned face has something of the same surely defined uninspired character as a careful copper-plate hand in a ledger.

I do not know quite what gave us this idea of a guest-house. Parkinford is just a small pleasant country town with a thirteenth-century church and a row of almshouses and a tiny square surrounded by sycamore-trees; the river flows past one end of the town, under a stone hump-backed bridge past irregular clumps of weeping willow that hang down like disentangled water-weed, brushing the water with their pale green branches in spring and summer. There was a time when I thought it a very dull town. Then I went away from it and—but I shall come to all that in a moment. All I wish to say now is that apart from the public-houses and a temperance commercial hotel down by the station we suddenly realised that our guest-house would be the only place where a certain class of tourist could get a room for the night. The fact that there were very few tourists who wanted to stop a night in Parkinford didn't discourage us; my sister quite rightly reasoned that it was our business to attract tourists. In time we should build up a reputation. Among other things my sister is a beautiful cook. She turns out tarts and pies and a great variety of dishes with the same ease and precise, mathematical beauty as she manipulates figures. I cannot cook at all, I haven't the slightest interest in mathematics, but I was young and that first summer of the new boarding-house, I had no doubts about my own beauty. I had very thick deeply wavy blonde hair and clear blue eyes. I was full too of that dee



otional energy that springs naturally with youthful  
uty—my heart full of it and hurting and not knowing  
ere to direct itself. There is a snapshot taken of me just  
at this time: it shows me in a short white dress standing  
ront of a large lime-tree at the back of the house. You  
see in this picture a young, eager looking girl with a  
le on her face; but what you cannot see or hear or feel  
the millions of delicate blossoms on the lime, the surge  
ees in them and the scented honey-dew falling on my  
and on my hands and on the brown summer grass.  
at this photograph does not show is the dreaming,  
ent creature behind the gaiety and the beauty. It does  
show how that young girl of twenty-two felt, dreaming  
in love with herself and rather foolishly conscious of  
ing a soul.

We opened the guest-house at last in the middle of  
gust, and we started off immediately with two guests.  
e was a Mr. Bernard Parker, who had been my father's  
k for twenty years and had lived in disgraceful back-  
m lodgings most of the time and had never married; the  
r was a Miss Millay, librarian at the public library, a  
ious sort of girl who had been friendly with my sister  
many years. These would form the permanent back-  
and for casual tourists, for which of course it was really  
late that year.

hen, no sooner had we opened, than we had a con-  
rable shock. It was announced in the papers, and soon  
yone was talking about it, that a new by-pass was to  
onstructed immediately on the south side, the river side,  
Parkinford. This would not only cut out the old hump-  
ed bridge, but by means of a great new concrete bridge  
ld span the river, the railway-line and the meadows  
were almost always flooded in winter. It was a project  
had been talked of for years and the realisation of  
h had been almost abandoned. Everyone was now very  
lant about it. It was only we who had reason to hate  
thought of it. We felt that nothing could have smashed  
ompletely our hopes of tourists and our hope for the

future. My sister, less emotional than I, more balanced and more resourceful, took it with a sort of logical stoicism, but from the first I made up my mind I hated that bridge.

The project of the new bridge had been announced about a month and preliminary work had already begun across the meadows by the river and the railway-line when something else happened. I had been down into the town shopping one evening and I came back about seven o'clock to find my sister talking to a young man in what we called the reception room. He had two large leather suit-cases with him and I knew, even before my sister spoke, that we had another guest.

"Oh! there you are, Linda," my sister said. "May I introduce Mr. Lawrence? Mr. Lawrence is coming to stay with us."

"Oh!" I said. "For long?"

"Well, for quite a time, I think," he said. "I've a job in the town that'll keep me busy for about eighteen months."

"Oh! Good," I said.

He looked at me and smiled. It was a curious smile. It gave me the strangest sort of feeling: the feeling that I had been singled out to receive it. There are some people who smile with the eyes, hardly moving the lips; others who show their teeth and keep the eyes immovable. This smile came from the slightest quiver of a mouth that did not open. I did not see it then, but it was a weak mouth. It was handsome and impertinent and it seemed to me to have all sorts of subtle and compelling qualities that were not analysable at a first glance, but you could see without thinking that it was vain and passionate and in a way sensitive too. I knew that I was right about the vanity. You could see that by the way he dressed: the smart grey suit, the brown suède shoes, the silk wine-red tie, the soft green Homburg hat. Oh! yes, you could see that he felt himself to be somebody that was somebody.

Instantly I didn't like him. I said something about it, I hoped he would be comfortable and he said "I hope so," almost mocking; and then my sister said she would show

to his room. He insisted on carrying his bags upstairs in walking behind my sister. I must say that the back of him was even more impressive than the front. It was curious how you got a feeling of jauntiness and class and vanity from the smooth cut of that grey suit and the smoother sweep of his very black, oiled hair. It was somehow how repellent and attractive it was.

My sister came down again in two or three minutes, and said at once, "Well, what do you think?"

"Well, he certainly doesn't undervalue himself," I said. "Linda," she said, "I think it ought to be our first rule to criticise guests. We've set out to make a business proposition of this place, and personalities have got to be cut out." That was just like Dora: sound and practical and admirably logical. "The main point is whether he pays his bill. In any case it's a very good let—eighteen months. It would do something to compensate us for that wretched let." "I only hope we're good enough for him," I said.

"Well, if you want my opinion," she said, "I think he's perfectly all right."

"You didn't ask him what his job was?" I said.

"No, I didn't. That's something else we ought to avoid. Curiosity. We'll find out soon enough what his job is." My sister was quite right. We did find out. Every evening, before breakfast, we had our separate jobs to do. Dora cooked breakfast and took up early morning tea to the guests; I prepared the tables and tidied the dining room. I had only one servant, Elsie, and she would be busy lighting the boiler-fire and sweeping the hall and stairs. One of my jobs was to take in the morning papers and the post. The second morning I was surprised to see the size of Mr. Lawrence's correspondence: a dozen or more letters, one registered, and several large flat packages. One of these packages was marked *Ministry of Transport: Urgent*, and then I knew who and what he was.

Soon, of course, everyone knew what I knew. Everyone knew Mr. Lawrence, the government engineer in charge of

the new bridge. And everyone, including even my sister seemed quite honoured by the presence in Parkinford of a government engineer. In fact the instant reaction in Parkinford was a sort of emotional dog-fight—half the women became at once raving jealous over him. Even Elsie and Miss Millay were jealous.

My own instant reaction was quite simple. I hated him. At twenty-two it is possible to hate some person or object or creed with a peculiarly pure, straightforward hatred, and to gain some kind of inverse pleasure from that hatred. This is how it was with J. Eric Lawrence and I. You will notice this J. Eric Lawrence—that's how he always styled himself: just that extra initial that put him a little above other men. I hated him more out of deliberation than out of any genuine feeling of revulsion. I cheated myself into thinking I hated him because more than anything he stood for the conception of the new bridge. He stood for something new and aloof and outside us and I took great pleasure in hating that something, whatever it was tremendously. I also got a special feeling of pleasure out of behaving perversely. If J. Eric Lawrence was nice to me, as he could be so easily and often was, I took great pleasure in being despicably rude and aggravating toward him. I took great pains to be contemptuous of his precious bridge, although it did not begin to take shape until the following spring. Above all I was disappointed whenever he was not there, as I had hoped, to offer himself for one of my attacks. The strange thing was that he did not mind my hatred. He accepted it with a kind of amused amiability. He accepted it with that smile of his: that very handsome vain and important smile, with its flicker of impertinence.

There isn't much doubt, I think, that all this would have worn off gradually; this childish, mechanised hatred certainly couldn't have gone on for ever. But after J. Eric Lawrence had been with us about two months something else happened.

I began to notice a remarkable change in my sister.

## II

From the first my sister had accepted J. Eric Lawrence in a sort of frank, business-like cordiality. It was very natural that they had a great deal in common. My sister, with her mathematical, resourceful mind, could understand and be interested in and even become enthusiastic about an engineering project like a bridge. To some people arithmetic I suppose, a form of music, and the calculation and planning and creation of that bridge must have had the quality of music to J. Eric Lawrence. And gradually and quite naturally my sister began to take an interest in that music. It began to have the deepest and most disturbing and most beautiful effect on her mind.

It was very strange how I first noticed this. My sister has never been given to very easy self-expression. No other girl would have begun to express reactions of love and happiness as soon as the cause of them became known to her. But my sister is abnormally passive. She is capable of feeling but not of demonstrating any great emotion: so that it is easy for anyone who does not know her to conclude that she is almost incapable of feeling emotion at all. Also she takes after my father, who was a staid, unattractive man with colourless, bony features. She has the trim, practical appearance of a cloth-bound book. As a consequence she has no means of expressing by physical beauty any great depth of emotion, however beautiful it is in itself. It is beyond her to fall in love actively. Her way would be to fall in love with dismal passivity, quietly, unobtrusively, out of sight.

There are women who would have found another quite possible way of expressing their feelings, but my sister could not even do that. She could not even cook her way to J. Eric Lawrence's heart. She was too practical for that. Our guests, unless they asked specially, ate the same food. It was against all my sister's principles to make an exception even of J. Eric Lawrence—yet one of her special recipes was for baked salmon omelettes, which were delicious and which



she only turned out on rare occasions, must have shown him that she had some positive, individual feeling for him. But she couldn't even do that.

No; my sister's way of showing that she was in love with J. Eric Lawrence was to go for a walk every evening. That was an old habit of hers: a walk into the town to post some letters, or as far as the common, or down to the public library to meet Miss Millay. She had always varied her route. But now it became obvious that her walk every evening was in the same direction and to the same place. She went down to J. Eric Lawrence's bridge.

It did not strike me until later how odd it was that for me the bridge was a means of hatred, whereas for my sister it was exactly the opposite. It was odd how that inanimate and at that time almost non-existent object—there was very little to be seen except huge piles of timber, iron and concrete lying about the meadows—should have affected our lives so much. Of course we were fools. There was I cheating myself into hating the man because I hated the bridge; and there was my sister, too inhibited and passive to express her love, going out every night, wet or fine, to gaze on a pile of raw materials lying in a field and a line of red signal lamps where the road had begun. Can you imagine anything sillier than that?

Perhaps that is what made me so angry. It all seemed so silly and irrational and pointless. It was Miss Millay who first told us about it. "Dora always used to meet me out of the library two nights a week," she said. "Now she never does. I can't understand it." I couldn't understand it either. Then gradually we found out where she was going, and I began to understand.

Without waiting to think it over, I felt terribly angry. Although I had never been directly angry with J. Eric Lawrence I felt my antagonism suddenly shift from him towards my sister. I found all sorts of reasons for my feelings. There is nothing a woman dislikes more than to see another woman running after a man, and it seemed to me that this was what my sister was doing. Another

g, it seemed cheap; it also seemed very clumsy and, such a calm, rational person as my sister, very absurd very childish. No: it did not once occur to me that perhaps she was deeply, terribly, mortally unhappy.

When I began to notice something else. My sister began to display the strangest and most comprehensive knowledge of bridge construction. It was winter now, and sometimes Eric Lawrence spent the evening playing chess with Parker in the drawing-room. One evening I went into the room just in time to hear my sister say:

Isn't the chief object of steel in reinforced concrete to resist tensile stresses?"

Yes, that's right," he said.

And the concrete, I suppose, offers resistance to compression?"

That's it," he said, and smiled a little: the old, homesome smile with its captivating impertinence.

I was staggered to hear my sister talk like this. To me a bridge was a bridge; it had never occurred to me that there was a science of bridge-making, and when my sister began to use terms like the theory of the resolution of forces, elastic deformation, the neutral axis and the relation of stress to strain I saw that I was listening to a new kind of love-attraction. She was trying to express her love for J. Eric Lawrence by her knowledge of something dear to him, by her brains and her ingenuity. There was something pathetic and absurd about it, and again I was strangely lonely.

For a time J. Eric Lawrence was very interested in this knowledge of my sister's. He was very clever, naturally, very energetic: he had once said that even as a boy he ate and drank and dreamed mathematics. I could well believe it. But a passion for mathematics is not inexhaustible, and a man who elects to talk of tensile stresses has only himself to blame if after a time she becomes very boring. And finally, that night, I saw J. Eric Lawrence becoming more and more bored by the dry, desperate, mathematical talk of my sister.

All this time I had been sitting by the fire, not saying anything. I could see his face. It was the sort of restless, sensuous, self-indulgent face that needs and is always looking for an emotionally responsive face of its own kind. A large part of the mind behind it had no interest in tensions or stresses; it was bored by all thought of such things as weight of steel in superstructure. It depended for its existence on emotion, warmth, excitable beauty. I saw him look at the clock, down at his hands, at the chess-board. Yes, he was bored, bored by the talk, the game, insufferably bored above all by my sister, and I felt glad about it. Then suddenly he looked up at me. It seemed just a repetition of an habitual look, quick, attractive, rather impertinent. But now there was something else about it too. It had a kind of confidential softness in it—but I had not time to analyse it or do anything before he hurriedly got up from the chess-board.

"I knew there was something I'd forgotten," he said. "I knew there was something. I'd meant to see Garbo in that film at the Ritz, and to-night is the only possible night I can go. I knew there was something."

He looked at my sister. Of course it was a weak excuse. He must have known that she never went to the cinema. She had always kept away on principle: thought it rather silly. He must have known that. Yet he said "How about coming too?"

"Me?" she said. "Oh! no." Her face began to colour deeply. "Oh! no, no thanks, I never go. I'd rather not."

He looked at me.

"What about you, Linda? You'll come, won't you?"

I got up. "Yes," I said. I spoke without thinking. "Yes. I love Garbo."

"Good," he said. "How many hours will it take you to get ready?"

"Two minutes," I said. "I just have to run upstairs."

"All right, I'll get my coat," he said.

I went upstairs and he went into the cloakroom to get his coat. After two or three minutes I came down again and at the same moment he came out of the cloakroom.

Ready?" he said.

"I'll just say good-night to Dora," I said. "In case she's late."

Opening the drawing-room door, I began to say "I'll say good-night, Dora, just in case——" when I saw Mr. Parker was sitting there alone. "Oh! where's she?" I said.

"I think she went out for her walk," he said.

I did not say anything. But as I went out into the dark—  
with J. Eric Lawrence I felt a rush of jealousy, hatred  
triumph combine in an intolerable feeling of excitement  
in my heart.

At precisely that moment there began a new antagonism  
between me and my sister.

### III

All that winter the building of the bridge, of course,  
went on; and all that winter the feeling of antagonism  
between me and my sister deepened and got stronger. The two  
structures were gradually built up together.

The construction of a bridge is a slow process; similarly  
the building up of a certain state of emotion, like deep  
hatred or revenge, needs time. My early feeling of hatred  
towards J. Eric Lawrence was superficial; I did not know  
why then. Yes, it was superficial, and it might have gone  
being superficial if it had not been for my sister. If my  
sister had not fallen in love with him I might not have  
fallen as I did. For the plain fact is that all that winter,  
from the autumn into the next spring, I set myself to fall in love with  
J. Eric Lawrence purposely, simply in order to spite my  
sister.

I have already said that my father had always shown  
partiality towards my sister, and had seemed to take  
unconscious or conscious revenge on me. It may be that  
this lay behind what I felt or did. I don't know. I only  
know that I took a despicable delight in doing what I did—  
driving J. Eric Lawrence away from her, in appealing to  
the selfish side of his nature that was foreign to her, in throwing

at him all my youthful, excitable beauty and greatly rejoicing in it.

All this did not happen suddenly. It was accomplished slowly, by little things—things like visits to the movies together, glances, a dance or two, by our coming into the dark quiet house very late at night, I in a flimsy dress with bare arms, and both of us warm and excited, and once by the snow lying in light soft flakes on my fur coat and on my gloves and my hair and he standing in the lighter hall and telling me how much I looked like something of a Christmas tree, in just the flattering, sentimental way that a young girl would love, whether she admitted it or not.

Yet all that winter there was no feeling of permanence about what was happening. I had the feeling first of not giving the best part of myself, then of not trusting him. At the first opportunity I felt he would drop me and run. All the time I felt I wanted something much more secure and beautiful.

It wasn't until the next summer that anything important happened. Then one evening J. Eric Lawrence and I were walking round the garden. For some reason or other we stopped under the lime-tree. I have already spoken about this lime-tree. It was quite large and must have been fairly old, and it overshadowed completely the west side of the house. Already that summer the grass had stopped growing underneath it and already in the warm early June evening it was possible to breathe the almost intolerably sweet scent of the first lime-flowers.

We stood underneath the tree and then J. Eric Lawrence suddenly began to say something about the roots of such a large tree must be having a damaging effect on the foundations of the house. "You ought to do something about it," he said.

"What could we do?" I said.

"Well, if it were mine," he said, "I should have it down."

At that moment I turned and saw my sister coming along the path from the house. That was rather her way: coming



us suddenly, as if she couldn't leave us alone together. Evening was very clear and calm, and she must have heard what J. Eric Lawrence had said.

"Do you want to cut down the lime-tree, Mr. Lawrence?" she said.

"Well, I'm only speaking from a practical point of view," he said.

"But why?"

"It probably keeps the house damper than it should be," he said, "and it certainly shuts out light and air. And I think it adversely affects the foundations."

"Well, that was practical enough—just the sort of practical sober reasoning that ought normally to have appealed to my sister. But she wouldn't have it. She suddenly showed she had an enormous sentimental attachment to that tree. She flushed hotly and said:

"You may want it down but I don't. I don't, and I won't have it!"

"I think Mr. Lawrence is right," I said.

"I spoke quickly. The reaction was instinctive. If I had thought a moment I should have realised how much I loved that tree, which with its first long olive-green leaves, the honey-fragrant blossom and the masses of claret-red branches in winter was the most beautiful thing in our over-grown, neglected garden. Yes, it was a beautiful tree, but suddenly I wanted it down. I wanted to be like my sister; I wanted to show her that J. Eric Lawrence and I were on one side and she on another. I wanted to be able to revel in an aggravated sense of my own phantasmagoric superiority."

"After all," I said, "the tree is no good to us."

"All the same, I love it and I'd rather die," she said, "than have it down."

"Well, there's no need to come over all sentimental about it."

"Perhaps I am sentimental," she said.

"Perhaps!" I said. "Just hark at her," I said to J. Eric Lawrence. "She must think we're a pretty hard-bitten pair."

"I don't think anything," she said. "I'm only saying what I feel."

"All right," I said, "you're not obliged to cry over it."

That was a bitter thing to say and she did not answer it. Instead she turned and walked back into the house. At that moment, as I now see it, a break was made between us: she on one side, J. Eric Lawrence and I on the other. When she had gone it seemed suddenly very silent. It was growing dark and the leaves of the lime-tree were wonderfully still. By the trunk of the tree there was an old iron seat and we sat down on it. For some time we sat without saying anything. There are evenings in summer when the air never grows cool and the nectar keeps rising in all the flowers in the warm darkness, until the darkness itself is inexpressibly deep with scent. You feel it would be good to sit there all night long and it was like that as we sat there under the lime-tree. My mind, young and excitable and at its best deeply sensitive, suddenly took a new direction. I felt very moved by the evening, the silence, the strange atmosphere of protectiveness given out by the lime-tree spreading itself above me.

We sat there for a long time. The lights in the house began to go out, and when the last one had completed the darkness J. Eric Lawrence turned to me and asked who it was and I said it was my sister's.

"Is your room on the other side?" he said.

"Yes," I said. I had made up my mind what I wanted now. "You know it's just at the top of the new staircase." I said, "where it comes up from the kitchen."

#### IV

He began to come to my room very often that summer and autumn, using the second staircase, until the bridge was finished. I don't know if my sister knew about it. She may have done; she may not. She knew that he was in the habit of working very late at night, at correspondence and play and such things, and it is possible that she never suspected

The odd thing is that I was not afraid of her knowing

the contrary I was afraid of her not knowing. I wanted to know. I wanted to confront her with the whole thing, to show her that what I felt for J. Eric Lawrence was something more real and more exciting and splendid than anything she could feel on that solitary nightly walkers down to the bridge. How often she walked down that bridge I don't know. I cannot begin to think what I felt for it, unless it was that in her level-headed, practical way she could never let herself fall in love with a man directly, but only with something symbolic of that man, like J. Eric Lawrence's bridge. I only know that I was in love with him, very deeply, very passively, at a distance, a sort of love by remote control, and I only knew later.

Then, in October that year, my sister had a great shock. She could not have been more greatly shocked if she had walked into my room one night and found J. Eric Lawrence

the morning, when she took J. Eric Lawrence's coffee eggs into the dining-room, she found Mr. Parker and Miss Millay shaking him enthusiastically by the hand.

"Why," she said, "is it a birthday or something?"

"No," Miss Millay said, very excited, "it's better than that. Better than that. It's the bridge. The bridge."

"The bridge?" my sister said.

"Yes!" Miss Millay said, "it's to be opened on November the fifteenth."

"The fifteenth?" my sister said. "But that's only three weeks away."

"Nevertheless," Mr. Parker said, "that's the date."

My sister looked at J. Eric Lawrence. "But it was to be eighteen months," she said. "It's hardly been fifteen."

"We had special orders from the Ministry some weeks ago to get a move on," he said. "We're anxious to get the road open before there's any chance of flooding on the one. I'm told it floods very easily down there."

"Then it means you'll soon be going?" my sister said.

"Yes, soon be going now," he said.

It was Miss Millay who told me how my sister reacted to that simple and, as it seemed, purposely abrupt statement. She went deathly white. There are women who would have rushed out of the room, made a demonstration. But there was only one demonstration my sister could make. It was the simple demonstration that she was terribly sick at heart.

I do not suppose J. Eric Lawrence noticed anything. That would be like him. Nor was I upset by the news that the bridge would soon be finished and that by the beginning of December J. Eric Lawrence would have gone away. My reason for not being upset was quite simple. I was determined that if he went away I should go with him.

That night I made him promise that. For him, as I see it now, it must have been a very simple thing to promise. I was very young, very excitable and in a dangerously credulous state of mind. In the darkness of the bedroom I could not of course see his face. All I wanted was a simple answer. All he had to say was "Yes, you can come with me," and that, of course, is exactly what he did say.

It was the next day when I realised that there was just one thing more that I wanted.

"If we're going away we ought to tell Dora," I said.

"Must we? It's four or five weeks yet."

"We ought to tell her," I said. "I want to tell her."

"Now?"

"As soon as possible."

"Look," he said. He smiled at me in the old, completely captivating way. "Let's wait until the bridge is finished. Won't that do?"

"All right," I said.

So we waited until the bridge was finished; and until the day the bridge was opened I went about with what must have been an impossibly conceited air of only partially disguised triumph. But it was nothing to the triumph that I saw on my sister's face when she stood with the privileged spectators on the bridge that soft clear November afternoon with the dead leaves of the neighbouring willow-trees blowing idly along the new white concrete, over the new

parapets and falling lightly on to the grass, on the railway track and on the clear water of the river below. There were many people there and they cheered loudly as the Minister of Transport, accompanied by a large group of important townsmen, cut the tape and made the usual speech about paying for the scissors and then shook hands with J. Eric Lawrence. The triumph on my sister's face was at that moment complete. It was wonderfully characteristic: lively, but deep; quite strong, but beautifully unselfish and sincere. The most wonderful thing about it was that it lacked pretension; it was not a triumph against anyone. Only my sister can tell what she felt, of course, high up on that long white bridge in the clear golden November air, but it seemed to me as if she might have regarded the bridge as her own spiritual triumph.

As soon as the bridge was opened the traffic began to flow over it, and shortly afterwards the Minister of Transport and the officials drove back to London, and then my sister, J. Eric Lawrence and I drove slowly home through the town. It had been a tense day for all of us but we did not speak much. My sister was too shy and reserved even to congratulate J. Eric Lawrence on his achievement, but all the time I knew she was still nursing a deep, private sense of triumph.

My sister was nursing something, and I knew that I could keep it much longer. My sister had had her triumph. Now it was my turn. And that evening, just before Miss May and Mr. Parker came down to supper, and when there were only the three of us in the sitting-room, my sister smiled at J. Eric Lawrence and said she supposed it was only a question of time now before he packed his bags? "You mean our bags," I said.

My sister did not speak. Her mouth was open a little, and I remember thinking how foolish, unreliable and utterly frightened she looked.

"You must have known," I said, looking straight at her. I had waited so long for that particular moment that now it seemed nothing in it. The tragic surprised vacancy in



my sister's face made everything else seem sterile.

"You must have known," I said. "Now the bridge finished we're going away together."

My sister did not speak. Her face was now very white. I had no more to say either. A fortnight later J. E. Lawrence left for London. I was to follow him four days later and meet him at the Park Hotel.

## V

It is now summer again and I am back in Parkinford. The summer has been a good one and, contrary to all our early fears, the bridge and the by-pass have made no difference to business with us. We have been very busy all summer and by evening, by eight or nine o'clock, after supper is over, we are both tired out. My sister does not go for her walk now, and I do not go out either. I have got into the habit of sitting in what used to be my father's study. It used to be a very dark, gloomy little room but it is very light now. The reason for this is that my sister has had all the branches of the lime-tree cut off, leaving the trunk stark and bare, so that now there is nothing to shut out the light.

But this is not what I am trying to say, and perhaps it would be better if I came to the point. I have never been a very practical person and the truth is that there are things about J. Eric Lawrence that I should have found out but which, because I was young and romantic and excitable, did not trouble about. But then my sister, who is extremely practical and far-sighted and realistic, did not trouble about them either. Of course we were fools, and it did not occur to either of us that J. Eric Lawrence was a married man who had for some years not lived with his wife. Even now my sister does not know that. She does not know that I went to the Park Hotel and found a letter telling me, in the most charming and persuasive terms of course, that simple and final fact, without giving an address to which I could send an answer. No, she does not know that, and if there is any question of triumph now it lies with

She knows that my love-affair with J. Eric Lawrence is over. She knows that he will never come back of course, there must always be for her the secret and perhaps living hope that one day he might drop in for tea, stay to supper, and talk once again of bridges and tensile stresses and smile at us in the old charming, self-indulgent, pertinent way and proceed to captivate us all completely. Of course he won't come. I know that. We were both of us. The strange thing is that I do not hold him responsible. I am responsible. If it had not been for that current and inexplicable feeling of antagonism towards my sister it would never have happened. My sister would have fallen in love with him in her own way, with unspoken conviction, and when he went away she would have locked it away very nicely in her heart. For a time she would have brooded over it, squeezed from it a few drops of miserable, solitary pleasure, and then probably after a time she would have got over it.

The point is that it is not all over. J. Eric Lawrence is gone, the bridge has long since become an unnoticed part of our everyday life, the beauty and excitement and pleasure of last summer are things of the past, but the antagonism remains.

It is, however, not only that. There is still something more. It might be possible to do something about the antagonism itself, but now something else has happened in the house where for so many years nothing ever happened before.

We have another permanent guest. He is a youngish man named Barnes, and he has just been transferred to one of the banks here. He is a very pleasant, courteous fair-haired man who could not cherish a moment's antagonism against his sister. He is gentle without being at all docile. He rushes to open doors for us, and moves with discretion when he is in late at night from the bank. He plays the piano very well, and you get the impression when he plays that his hammers are muffled with wool. There is nothing pertinent or passionate or vain about him, he could

never build a bridge over a river, but it seems to me that he is the sort of person in whom you could confide an enormous amount of trouble. He listens with the gravest attention to all you say, and it is obvious he would not hurt a soul. He is like a well-made cushion on which you could rest your head.

And that is exactly how I feel. After the bitterness and shock and tumultuous emotion of the affair with J. E. Lawrence I feel that I should like to rest. I should like to rest for a long time. I should like to find someone in whom I could confide and who will never think of hurting me—someone who will be decent to me for the rest of my life.

It is the simplest, most natural desire in the world, and yet I am immensely frightened of it. And I am frightened of it because my sister has begun to think exactly as I do. She is also thinking of Mr. Barnes. There is something in her quiet, passive nature which would appeal enormously to a man like him, and it is easy to see that in a very prosaic, very inglorious sort of way he could fall in love with her.

I am at the moment sitting in my father's former study looking out of the window. In my absence last winter, as I said, my sister lopped the branches of the lime-tree. A few fresh twigs, now a deep claret colour, have shot out from the trunk, but there are no flowers this year and what was once a large, dark graceful tree now looks hateful. You would not believe what a difference it makes. You see things you could never see before, and there is light everywhere.

Downstairs in the drawing-room Mr. Barnes is very softly playing the piano. I have been listening to him, but I cannot tell exactly what it is he is playing. It is something very soothing and subdued, in a minor key, and I have no doubt that somewhere in the house my sister is listening too.

It is almost dark and I have been looking and listening for a long time. The bridge has been built. I have been away and have come back again. My sister has lopped the branches of the lime-tree and now in the house there is the sound of this gentle Mr. Barnes playing the piano. Things have changed, and yet in a way they have remained the same. For God's sake what is going to happen now?

# STEPHEN SPENDER

## HOW SHALL WE BE SAVED?\*

However one views the German-Soviet Pact, it completes the return of our civilization, for some time at all events, to the game of power politics. The voices of all but the most strongly entrenched politicians are silenced or meaningless, and in the vociferous orthodoxy of the Communists in the democratic countries is made as ineffectual in relation to Russian policy as is that of the Nazis in the Italian Tyrol in relation to Germany. Public matters are decided in secret in a far-removed Valhalla by conferences of warlords, decisions are transmitted in code telegrams, sudden proclamations carried out by armies and aeroplanes.

The abandonment of effective discussion dates from September, 1938. Before that there was a period of some years when protests about China, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, seemed of some importance. Many writers were drawn into political activities, and some of the younger ones were killed in Spain.

The surrender of all political discussion before power and force leaves not only writers but all thinking people in a condition of comparative isolation. The history that is being made in our time is different from and worse than the failures of a world ordered and devout, in the minds of Christians, fulfilled and well-adjusted, in the minds of psychologists, offering immense prosperity to all, in the minds of some scientists. The Christian, the psychologically minded and the scientifically distributed worlds all seem attain-

*Pain, Sex and Time*, by Gerald Heard (Cassel, 10s. 6d. net);  
*For Many a Summer*, by Aldous Huxley (Chatto and Windus, 7s. 6d. net);  
*Idea of a Christian Society*, by T. S. Eliot (Faber and Faber, 5s. net);  
*Fate of Homo Sapiens*, by H. G. Wells (Secker and Warburg, 7s. 6d. net).

able with good will and energy. Any of them would remove most of our present ills and enormously increase the sum of happiness. Yet power remains in the hands of those who, equipped with all the resources of modern machinery, are tied to the worst aims of traditional conquest and greed.

The power of certain interests is the dominating political evil of today. Yet to remove it, the exercise of a power as ruthless as theirs is necessary, and this would be bound to lead to destruction. The causes of political despair today are two: the contrast between the world as it is and as it might be; and the problem of power.

Four well-known writers, Gerald Heard, Aldous Huxley, H. G. Wells and T. S. Eliot have recently produced books dealing with this situation. All of them agree that the condition of the world is desperate, and that unless something which they recommend is done, catastrophe will follow. They only disagree about what it is essential to do.

None of them looks any longer to a political party for the way out. All agree that there must be a change in the mentality of men living today if we are to be saved. One might divide their attitudes of mind into those of two saints (Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley), one Churchwarden (T. S. Eliot), and one old-fashioned liberal sinner (H. G. Wells).

The position of Huxley and Heard is now openly mystical. They perform spiritual exercises, they enjoy supernatural experiences, they practice Yogi, they fast, they set aside special hours of the day for meditation, and they seek to exist on a non-human plane outside time altogether. The theme of Aldous Huxley's novel is that all human action is evil, so we must seek to exist within timeless eternity. The degree of revelation which they achieve depends on the degree of saintliness which they attain in their lives, because revelation is to them a direct result of their way of living. One cannot read their books without asking Is it right that they should be living in Hollywood?, and wondering whether one couldn't oneself submit to yogi



cises in such a pleasant climate. And these questions are raised because Huxley and Heard are really out to set examples for saving the world.

Fortunately perhaps, Mr. Eliot does not have to be a prophet, for his task is not the revelation of a new truth but the application of an old dogma and orthodoxy to the conditions of the modern world. This makes it possible to approach him more critically, for one knows the tradition in which he is trying to live. It is possible to admire, to accept or to dismiss Heard and Huxley, but one has to postpone judgement on their experiment until one has seen more of the results.

*Main Sex and Time* is not the work of a scientist, philosopher, or poet, any of whom has a certain standard of accuracy within certain conventions in his use of words.

Heard's arguments are based almost entirely on a careless use of false analogies between the physical world and the mind of the individual. What is in literal fact a false analogy may be a very effective poetic metaphor, yet Heard intends his metaphors to be taken literally.

His whole thesis rests on an assumption that a time has arrived in the evolution in the psyche in which the mind of man can take a great leap forward, corresponding to a revolution in the physical world. Evolution has broken down the physical world and remains to evolve in the psychical. The birth pangs of this change are to be found in the excess of pain and sexual activity in human life, both of which waste forces to be directed to a more purposive end.

Probably experts would find much to criticise in Mr. Heard's historic and scientific sketches which fill up more than half of his book. But at the end, one finds something which does not depend on the accuracy of these arguments—vision of a new society with three orders, those who are seeking their own physical salvation, those who are disinterested and disinterested administrators of power, and those whom he describes as the "neo-Brahmins".

Heard expresses with the greatest conviction the conviction that a change in society must take place first of all in

the minds of individuals, since political and economic systems are only projections of the minds of contemporaries. To those who are beginning to despair of the view that a fundamental change in the economic system will result automatically in the classless society, regardless of the means used by the "dictatorship of the proletariat", Mr. Heard's view will seem the antithesis of everything they have accepted, and they may, for that very reason, find that it makes them think again. Mr. Heard does not attempt to solve the problem of power—he tries to remove the idea of power from men's minds altogether, and substitute for it a psycho-analysed bureaucracy. Nevertheless, he leaves one feeling—as does also Mr. Eliot in his picture of a new Christendom—that the possessors of today are hardly likely to yield up their power before the attractions of the good life; which means that power must either be wrested from them, or we must wait for a total collapse of productivity: and it is difficult to believe that a psychological mutation or a Christian revival would spring from another post-war period. All the same, if we begin to doubt the effectiveness of political systems, the only hope lies in a change within individuals, and Mr. Heard's book points to that.

I take it that Mr. Huxley is a disciple to Mr. Heard, and that the portrait of Propter, in *After Many A Summer*, the prophet of "timeless eternity" is suggested by Mr. Heard, just as D. H. Lawrence suggested a prophetic character in another of his novels. Mr. Huxley, like most disciples, already shows signs of turning the gospel inside-out. Infected by Huxley's hatred of human existence, Heardism becomes a quest for escape from the body, and set against the portrait of the timeless Propter, Mr. Huxley makes the most savage of all his attacks on life today, in the eighteenth century, and, by implication, two hundred years or so hence. The diary of the Fifth Earl is the best pastiche he has written, and I only wish that he had, by some ingenious time device, written the whole novel from the point of view of this eccentric living in the Eighteenth Century. As a novel, the book is worse than most Aldous Huxley,

h amounts to saying that the characterization is always ctyped, and at times wildly bad. The worst character ete, a communist-scientist simpleton whom Mr. Huxley as a kind of butt throughout the book. However this not prevent him from suddenly on p. 227 filling e Pete's mind with an encyclopaedic Huxley-Heard itation on the modern novel. "Because, if you con- red them dispassionately, nothing could be more silly squalid than the themes of *Phêdre*, or *Othello*, or *athering Heights*, or the *Agamemnon*," etc., etc., *ad eam*. Yet, maddening as much of it is, this seems to me most stimulating book Mr. Huxley has written.

Huxley, Heard and Wells all show a lively and funda- tal grasp of the world-situation to-day. Mr. Eliot, ough disturbed by Munich, seems curiously out of touch. book reads like one of those letters in *The Times* in ch the bald head of some Bishop is seen for the first e emerging from the egg-shell of a lifetime's com- ency. In fact, *The Times* seems, from his quotations, to his main source of information about the state of the ld.

his is not to deny that Mr. Eliot is deeply concerned e events, or that he would like to see a very altered ety. But all the same, as one reads his pages and iders the world he has to offer—a world of Church cation and no Birth Control—one recalls Mr. Propter's eeping remark in Huxley's novel: "Unless you're steadily unflaggingly cynical about the solemn twaddle that's ed by bishops and bankers and professors and politicians all the rest of them, you're lost." I think the trouble Eliot is that, like Henry James, he is at once impressed confused by the European tradition. All his criticism eally a discussion of this problem: How far is the ition transformed almost beyond recognition in modern and how far does it conform to appearances which are ivals from the past? His own best poetry, and his iration for James Joyce, tell him that the tradition is ething outrageous and even revolutionary. But at the

same time he has to "shore up" fragments from the past. He cannot accept the fact that the "tradition" today might be the Waste Land rather than the chapel among the ruins. Reading his poems, I feel that "The awful daring of a moment's surrender" forsook him at some moment and that now he is left looking for the beatific vision amongst the obituary notices of *The Times*. But I hope I may be wrong.

It is rather a relief after so much high thought to find oneself in the company of that unrepentant sinner H. G. Wells. A relief until one reads his concluding pages which are a frank confession of despair. He examines the world's situation against a biological and historical background, in the spirit of his *Outline of History* and *Science of Life*. Readers of Huxley, Heard and Eliot, should read also this book, for his broad and complete survey has an element of humility before the facts which they lack. After reading T. S. Eliot, it is specially useful to be reminded of the Church's record in education and social reform.

H. G. Wells believes, like the others, that if *Homo Sapiens* was prepared even now to take thought and act on it, the world could avoid disaster. But his history and science do not console him with the promise of an evolutionary psychological mutation. Nevertheless, the fact that these four books should have been written contemporaneously offers a faint hope that if politics descend to a new level of force and cynicism, men may withdraw their support from their leaders. They may begin to look to the expert and the virtuous and the understanding to make a new world, instead of the powerful and the unscrupulous. But it is unlikely.

# GEOFFREY GRIGSON

## NEW POETRY

- The Map of Love.* Dylan Thomas (Dent, 7s. 6d.).  
*Poets of Tomorrow.* First Selection (Hogarth Press, 6s.).  
*Poems.* Christopher Caudwell (Bodley Head, 6s.).  
*Amber Innocent.* Joan Adeney Easdale (Hogarth Press, 5s.).  
*The Unknown Known.* Sturge Moore (Martin Secker, 5s.).  
*More People.* Edgar Lee Masters (Appleton-Century, 10s. 6d.).  
*The Spirit Watches.* Ruth Pitter (Cresset Press, 3s. 6d.).  
*Modern Poetry.* Chosen by Robert Lynd (Nelson, 7s. 6d.).

There are two kinds of poet, among others. There are ones who avoid the means for what they think are the ends of poetry: these should often be writing (or more properly reading) philosophy. There are the ones who get into the means, and acknowledge, or devise for themselves, no end, or else stitch on some fake ends, which are never held with full belief. The ends are 'the end of the age.' The means are natural objects; and, of course, natural objects are more than fish and dandelions. They are words, or rather language, and they include other things, and the actual body, and the ego of the writer. In the last generation from sixteen to twenty-five there are as a rule certain poets: imitation, interest in himself and interest in objects other than himself. For example, in Blake, there came first *Poetical Sketches*, in which there are imitation, self-interest, and interest in other objects. Blake went on to his struggle against deism and natural religion in favour of spiritualism and "Imagination"; and since Imagination is the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable World is but a faint shadow," Blake was forced to go against natural objects and turn against them—so far that he declared to the slightly puzzled Crabbe "I fear Wordsworth loves Nature, and Nature is the work of the Devil. The Devil is in us as far as we are concerned with Nature." Blake, in fact, pushed beyond the necessity



of art. But he only painted or wrote well because he also had "loved Nature," and so could design the eclipse for Thornton's *Pastorals* or describe the flowers in the second book of *Milton*. Samuel Palmer, who met Blake when he was nineteen, had been imitating Turner. He discovered from Blake that the Natural World was but the shadow of the Eternal World, and something to despise. Then he went down to Shoreham and within five years was writing in amazement "I really did not think there were those splendours in visible creation which I have lately seen. You cannot, in other words, counterfeit, or make a short-cut to, Blake's ends. It is therefore at once right to suspect poetry by young writers which is too much a poetry of ends, which does not imitate enough, or which is not enough concerned with natural objects. Mr. Dylan Thomas's new book cannot be suspected for those reasons. His poems are still very much about himself. Suppose a remarkable urchin turned out the dirty lining of his magic pocket, in which he had casually collected the pubic hairs of a lion (page 3), two inches out of an indecent masterpiece by Fuseli, some recollections from Webster, a couple of Pleiades (glass alleys) and a comet, two or three stumps of coloured chalk, a tooth, some screwed-up counterfoils from sixpenny postage orders, nail-parings, a sucked-out tin of condensed milk, a pill-box of maggots, and one of Joanna Southcott's chests. Suppose this pile were divided into *merzbild* poems and short stories—there would be *The Map of Love*; or very nearly, because there is something extra by this time in some of Mr. Thomas's poems which has little to do with the contents of a natural pocket. There is some talk of love other than self-love:

I know her scrubbed and sour humble hands  
Lie with religion in their cramp.

Other examples are poems 3, 4 and 9. This book still contains ripe nonsense which pretends to be sensual wisdom, but the poems are better written, and sound less monotonous. Whether a better and saner poetry will emerge from these poems (as *Songs of Innocence* emerged from *Fair Elend*)

ot know.

en together, Christopher Caudwell's *Poems* and *The of Love* show up one another's faults. Caudwell, who an intelligent, knowing writer, knew too much about ends which the sensual means-fuddled Dylan Thomas ot reached. As one can see from his *Illusion and y*, Caudwell had great difficulty in writing; and his, clear enough in what is said, are some of them going pastiche; but good ironic splinters occur in (Ruskin is: "the organ-voiced old maid of art"); he epigram on Dryden:

He made the eyes of Logic glow,  
His curse anticipated Fate  
His serene justice to his foe  
Adds to the list of virtues, hate.

ets of *Tomorrow* there are poems by Peter Hewett ), H. B. Mallalieu (1914), Ruthven Todd (1914) Robert Waller (1913). I admired, or at least enjoyed, cept three of Mr. Todd's poems, none of Mr. lieu's, none of Mr. Waller's and four or five lines Mr. Hewett. Mr. Todd's poems are a little dotty, usic hall acts in wide trousers; but they are neat, with ips in the act, and the wide trousers conceal a moral: er words, the dotty tumbling is not entirely for its ke. He imitates (Louis MacNeice, for example, and an Cameron), he has a look at objects, if not with attention:

I remembered the cast foal lying where it died,  
Which we buried, one evening, above high-tide;  
And the three rams that smashed the fank-gate,  
Running loose for five days on the moor  
Before we could catch them—far too late  
To prevent an early lambing the next year.

his poems keep together, but more with the string pe and rhyme, than with skeleton sketches of close

for the others:—

Hewett. Velvety with some C.P. ribbons tied on, but

the thatch was mossy and the well was rust  
 the hollow hogweed grew beside the barn, etc.  
 Expectations are justified.

Mr. Mallalieu. Scraggy, à la mode, and watery in a general way

Between my words and you  
 Equation is always a guess:  
 The sense which you construe  
 Has shifted into stress.

But he has written other poems which are more effective

Mr. Waller:

Our chaste ambition the last evasion punished.  
 So far, so trite.

The only other book by a young or youngish poet I have had to read is Miss Easdale's *Amber Innocent*. There seems to be an understanding that bad verse must always be treated more gently than bad fiction. But this long poem is too like a novel: it is like a dew-on-the-grass first novel by a daughter of a member of the Book Society's panel who has mixed her *Wuthering Heights* with some Maeterlinck and some Lolly Willows.

Amber heard the tiny moan of a child-voice  
 Ill, and far away in the turret.

Megathy had woken!

No. And there is no possibility of changing "no" to "yes" over the books by Mr. Sturge Moore, Mr. Edgar Lee Masters and Miss Pitter, or the anthology chosen by Mr. Robert Lynd. Mr. Moore has spent many years—most of his years—in sincere contemplation of the difficulties and felicities of life and art, but I am bound to say that I have enjoyed very little in his collected poems. He has never been very nimble in the means. The long poem about Sigurd in this book resembles, alas, a museum crocodile; and it is melancholy that this represents the other poems which follow:

Shall Hope's Fight bud unfurl a flush  
 As though rose grew

Through her the bush  
From me the soil.

s poetry is end without means. Mr. Masters must be still in the fame which he earned from his *Spoon Anthology*: have a look at him as an American, an adulterated and decayed Crabbe, and as America's Wilfred Gibson:

s Pitter, a Hawthornden prizewoman, writes poetry of a kind which Mr. Lynd likes to put in anthologies—poetry, poetry which seems to say something spiritual of something natural, but poetry, like fake painting, would show up badly under X-rays and the microscope. The name of her book postulates what are called precisely 'spiritual values,' but such values are not called activity by naming them: they are a matter, for one important thing, of the language. Miss Pitter's verse is a sloppy "And one the livid lasting-pea." No again. And for "Maggie too, the moon-eyed maid," and much more. Miss Pitter comes pretty close to illumination and a poem in *Rare Birds*, if you subtract the ludicrous first line, but the best analogy I know for her poems—including even this poem—are the pictures which come naturally up from the past, or rather from Newlyn, to the Academy, for the tempera and watercolour room.

Mr. Lynd's anthology is that room. Or it is the Big Bed of Ware combined with the Procrustean bed, in which, squeezed-jumbled or stretched or curtailed to fit, they all lie most curiously together—Hardy with Ernest Rhys, Hardy with Humbert Wolfe, Housman with Squire, Eliot with Sylvia Lynd, Auden with Miss Pitter, naturally.

This book will become interesting when it turns up for reference in Faringdon Road as a sociological exhibit for the new Halévy of the next century. Meanwhile I propose to refer myself by quoting from the preface "I have read Mr. W. B. Yeats's *Lake Isle of Innisfree*, not because I do not think it is a beautiful poem, but because Yeats seems to me to have written equally beautiful poems which are less widely known." A penetrating intuition.



## SELECTED NOTICES

*New Writing*, No. 3 Christmas 1939 (Hogarth Press 7/6 net) is a full throated swansong, with a hint of resurrection, of the bi-annual volume with which we are familiar. It is also one of the best, and though lacking in highlights has a general standard which permits no lapses. *New Writing* can be divided into (1) literary contributions and (2) its own special brand of nightmare reportage. Nightmares of authentic danger or poverty, of Fascist bullet coalmines falling in, unemployment and starvation. The most effective of these are by John Lepper (death in Moors), B. L. Coombes (twenty tons of coal), Walter Allen (accidental murder), Sam Ross (no shoes), Lionel Davidson (aged seventeen) (stealing from hunger), and G. M. Skelton (stealing by mistake) . . . Miss Lewin's nightmare is of a day in a hospital, and Jan Petersen's of smuggling books into Germany. All these hit the soft spot. On the literary side Auden contributes one fine poem in America. MacNeice some of his lyrical journalism, Spender an unusual poem, and Plomer an amusing ballad. The criticism is dull except for an astonishing article about the future of Maiakovsky, who may have been a great poet but must have been an intolerable man. More quotations would have helped. There is a good story by Pritchett, in the *Beany* tradition, a nice article by Orwell on Marrakech, and some drear photographs including the inevitable group of Auden, Spender and Isherwood, without which any new magazine looks naked. Not the heights of other *New Writings*, and not the depths, excellent value for the money, and John Lehmann exhibits the conjuror's power by which he produces time after time unknown names who turn out articles both unusual and readable.



*British at Home* by Pont. Collins 5/-. These drawings Punch reveal an original artist whom one can compare Thurber. An English Thurber, whose use of shading gives a muddy effect, through which loom realistic and some faces of our Middle Class, the belles and beaux of Blokeage. The jokes are subtle, the drawing excellent entitle Pont of Punch to the front rank of English artists. After laughing over his impressions of a cocktail one realises that, with the best of Beachcomber or Pins, he is to be congratulated on the purity and clarity of his observation, and the total absence of that notable defect of English humour, the undercurrent of s. No Little Men here. Well worth buying.

*Sweet Homes* by Osbert Lancaster. John Murray This is a sequel to *From Pillar to Post*, and does for or decoration what the companion volume did for lecture. Indispensable to anyone interested in the sh home, these observant drawings which never to their subject, are a delight. They teach a great deal, h Mr. Lancaster is perhaps not sufficiently appreciative e eighteenth century owing to his nostalgia for the eenth. His contempt for the age we live in is justified is impressions of *Stockbroker Tudor*, *Functional*, *on Street Baroque* etc. The letterpress is somewhat e and uneasy, except where a Mr. Chips interior such *Anglican* is in question. An edition in colour of the two in one with less letterpress is now essential. Perfect tmas present.

*Blaze of Noon* by Rayner Heppenstall. Secker & urg 7/6d. Novel (noticed by *Evening Standard* for its ness), about the love life of a blind masseur in a sh manor. Excellent picture of English country life cadence. The blind man, like a D. H. Lawrence night-man, prowls round the establishment finding the n unawakened and the men wanting. An irritating, ve, well-written book, where the womaniser writes

about his fellows with the contempt with which the military describe politicians, or the rich the poor. As social comment interesting, as a sexual boast, somewhat mystical, verbose and humourless. Specimen dialogue. 'I said to myself "now she is one and indivisible, a whole" . . . she said "I feel whole, oh Louis, I am whole."' Introduction by Elisabeth Bowen.

*Down River* by John Lehmann: Cresset Press. 12/6d. Nostalgic reading for all Danube lovers, for those who know Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, who have descended the Kazan and can convert Lei into Leva. This is a model for the travel book of the future, in which political and economical and human problems are equally mixed, and cemented by the love of the author for the country which he knows so well. It is marred by a most pedestrian style which renders the facts duller than they need be, and makes one concentrate on the descriptive passages. Plenty of good photographs make this a book which every mittel-european will delight to handle, and for the student of foreign affairs it is comprehensive and up to date.

*The Patience of Maigret*, by Georges Simenon. (Routledge 7/6 net). Should be a favourite not only with detective story fans, but also with everyone who knows and likes France. Quick-moving, slick and snappy, it towers above its English counterparts. Divided into two halves. First murder in Paris, second death at Concarneau. In both cases Maigret solves the problem to the satisfaction of the Suret and ourselves. His method is patience, or the battle of nerves, and in the end the criminal almost turns the key on himself. Strongly recommended for its realism and characterisation, especially the first part which takes you into the bars of the Latin Quarter, out to cheap hotels in the suburbs, back to the *George V*. Simenon knows his Paris and the people too. He presents them with a clarity and simplicity which makes him more satisfying to read than most novelists. The dust cover, by E. MacKnight Kauffer, deserves a special mention.